

NAVAIR Sustainability Office



The NAVAIR Range Department Sustainability offices at Patuxent River, Md; China Lake, Calif.; and Point Mugu, Calif., have the responsibility to address range sustainability issues and to help manage (minimize) encroachment on operations conducted at NAVAIR Ranges at these three sites. The Range Sustainability Office supports the fleet's sustainable readiness by ensuring access to NAVAIR ranges, facilities and resources, and promotes public support for NAVAIR's test, training, evaluation and experimentation mission.

The NAVAIR Range Department Sustainability Office at Patuxent River, Md., assesses current efforts and roles in support of range sustainability. The Sustainability Office, which supports the Atlantic Test Ranges (ATR), was previously known as the Operational Environmental Planning (OEP) office. The group provides recommendations for improving range sustainability and managing (minimizing) encroachment on operations conducted at the Patuxent River Complex.

The Sustainability Office currently supports range sustainability through tasking in the following core areas:

- Community Noise Disturbance Response Support
- Monitoring and Tracking of Environmental Impact Statement
- Review of Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) Planned Operations and Test Events
- Range Management Planning Support

Flight testing at the Patuxent River Complex



Checklist facilitates environmental planning



Website tracks aircraft events and disturbances



for more information

(301) 342-1197 / 1170 / 3682 / 8640 / 3607 / 1181
23013 Cedar Point Road
Patuxent River, MD 20670
PAXR_ATRCONTACT@navy.mil

www.navair.navy.mil/ranges

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environmental impact statement

Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River reached an important environmental achievement in 1999 when its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for flight operations reached a Record of Decision (ROD). Patuxent River is the first Navy flight test range to achieve this milestone. The EIS puts the Station on solid environmental footing and positions it for the future by addressing current and potential operations. As a result of public involvement during the EIS process, the NAS agreed to implement five mitigation measures. All measures relate to noise. They include installing noise monitors to determine the impact of supersonic flights; improving the way the Station responds to and tracks noise complaints; expanding unmanned aerial vehicle routes so that they are mostly over the Chesapeake Bay; creating operational guidelines for the outdoor engine test cell that focus on optimal times it can be used; and producing a brief for pilots to educate them about the importance of being a good neighbor and steward of the environment. With a signed EIS in place, the Navy is able to meet its commitment to conserve and protect the unique natural and cultural resources of the Patuxent River Complex and Chesapeake Bay while protecting human health and welfare. ATR can efficiently and effectively utilize the assets under its control to meet its strategic planning initiatives while complying with applicable local, state, and Federal environmental laws.

enhanced readiness team (ERT)

The Navy encourages the establishment of ERTs to provide an interdisciplinary approach to addressing encroachment issues. In September 2004, NAS Patuxent River established a local ERT that includes representatives from NAS, NAVAIR, the Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC), and Naval District Washington (NDW). These commands provide subject matter experts in Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) Planning, Air Operations, Engineering, Environmental, Frequency Management, Legal, Natural Resources, Public Affairs, Range Operations, RDT&E Operations, Safety, and other disciplines as required.

The Sustainability Office leads and the NAS Commanding Officer co-chairs the local ERT, which addresses local encroachment issues and supports the NDW region by providing them with encroachment information.

The Sustainability Office:

- Reviews all planned test and training operations, analyzes future program requirements and operations.
- Maintains and manages a checklist that project planners use to enter proposed actions for operations.
- Reviews operational planning data to identify trends or instances that require management attention.
- Assists environmental analysts, project planners and Range Safety by providing Geospatial Information System (GIS) and mapping support.
- Responds to noise complaints, makes formal reports, coordinates with Air Operations, ATR and squadrons to investigate incidents, and provides feedback to callers. All information is stored in a noise disturbance database.
- Produces annual noise reports for management review. These reports provide a summary of events, trend analysis and recommendations to mitigate noise complaints.
- Collects and analyzes data on 10 operational factors related to EIS parameters. The data is compared to EIS estimates to ensure compliance with the Record of Decision (ROD) and to highlight trends in operational tempo for management.
- Periodically reviews the status of the five EIS mitigation measures to ensure consistency with the ROD.
- Provides subject matter experts for noise encroachment issues.
- Reviews and comments on draft OPNAV and NAVAIR instructions and policy documents to help ensure that field experience is considered and addressed.
- Supports Fleet Forces Command by supplying data related to fleet training that takes place in the Patuxent River Complex.